

Labour Market

NOTES ■ July 2013

Alberta's employment largely unchanged, unemployment rate ticks up

Alberta

- **Employment growth flat.** Alberta's employment dipped slightly (-700) in June, following two very strong months of job gains. June's flat reading was largely due to losses in public sector jobs (-2,400), which more than offset the private sector gains (+1,600). Alberta has gained 55,100 jobs since June 2012, representing a 2.6% increase.
- **Goods sector adds jobs.** The agriculture (+2,800) and construction (+2,400) industries contributed the most to the 2,300 increase in goods sector employment gains. Employment in the services-producing sector fell by 3,100 in June, largely due to job losses in health care and social services (-6,600).
- **Unemployment rate edges up as more people look for work.** The unemployment rate moved up to 5.0 per cent in June. The increase was largely a result of 3,500 people joining the labour force.
- **Weekly earnings continue to climb in March.** Average weekly earnings increased to \$1,098 in April. This is 3.4% higher than April of last year.

Employment Growth by Province, June 2013 vs. June 2012



Source: Statistics Canada

Canada

- **Canadian employment virtually unchanged.** Canadian employment was roughly flat (-400) in June, after posting an impressive gain of 95,000 in the previous month. British Columbia (+8,900), Manitoba (+7,300), and Saskatchewan (+4,300) were the only provinces to post significant gains. Five provinces posted declines. Canada has gained 242,300 jobs (+1.4%) since June 2012.
- **Unemployment rate unchanged.** The Canadian unemployment rate remained at 7.1% in June.
- **Weekly earnings increase.** Canadian average weekly earnings moved up to \$910 in April, representing a 2.2% gain over April 2012.

Alberta Labour Market Indicators

Indicator	June or Latest*
Employment	2,200,600
month-over-month change	-700
year-over-year % change	2.6%
Alberta Unemployment Rate (UR)	5.0%
Edmonton UR**	4.6%
Calgary UR**	5.0%
Participation Rate	73.1%
Average Weekly Earnings (AWE)	\$1,098.36
year-over-year % change	3.4%
Average Hourly Wage	\$27.71
year-over-year % change	4.4%
Job Vacancy Rate**	2.5%

Source: Statistics Canada

* All data is from the Labour Force Survey for June except AWE, which is from the April Survey of Employment, Payrolls and Hours (SEPH), and the job vacancy rate from March

** This indicator is calculated as a three-month moving average

For definitions of the data indicators discussed in this publication, please see the second page of August's [Labour Market Notes](#)

National Household Survey Reveals Broad Based Strength in Alberta's Labour Market

Last month, Statistics Canada released labour market information from the 2011 National Household Survey (NHS). This survey provides a large amount of information on Alberta's labour market that is not available in the monthly Labour Force Survey. Using the NHS data, this Labour InSight looks at an important labour market indicator: the employment rate, or the proportion of the population over the age of 15 who are employed (see October 2012 issue of Labour InSight for more information). The NHS data indicate that Alberta has an employment rate that far exceeds the national average, with a positive difference that is observed across all major age groups and education levels.

Employment rate in Alberta highest among provinces

With an employment rate of 69.0% in 2011, Alberta continues to have the highest share of people aged 15+ with a job among the provinces. Alberta's rate is about 4 percentage points above the province (Saskatchewan) with the next highest rate and well above the national average of

60.9%. Alberta's strength is also notable at the regional level: among the census metropolitan areas, Calgary (70.0%) and Edmonton (69.0%) had the highest employment rates in Canada.

Alberta's employment rate exceeds national average across age groups and education levels

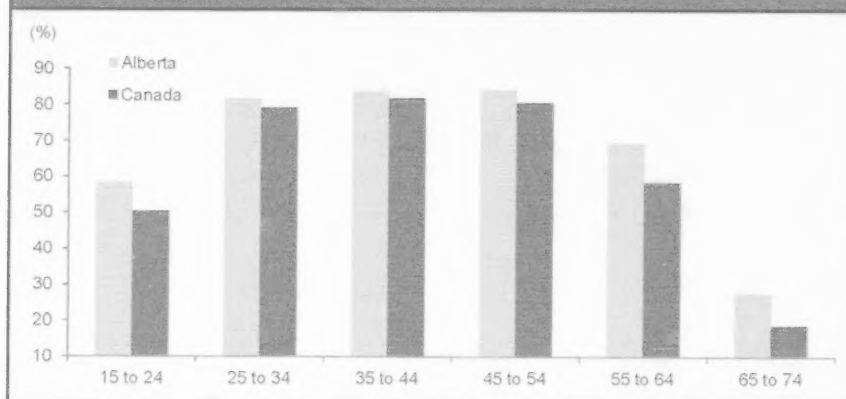
One explanation for Alberta's higher overall employment rate is that the province has a relatively high share of people in their prime working years (aged 25-54). Employment rates tend to be much higher in this age group relative to those aged 15-24 and 55+. However, this provides only part of the explanation. According to the NHS results, Alberta's relatively high employment rate is observed across all major age groups (Chart 1). The differences between Alberta's employment rate and the national average is most pronounced for the youngest (15-24) and oldest age groups (55+).

Alberta's higher employment rate is also reflected across all levels of education attainment. Employment rates tend to increase with educational attainment in general, yet Alberta's employment rate is higher than the national average across all education levels (Chart 2). Alberta has a particularly strong employment rate for people with an apprenticeship or a trade certificate. In fact, Alberta is the only province where the employment rate is higher for people with an apprenticeship or a trade certificate than for individuals with a university degree.

Conclusion

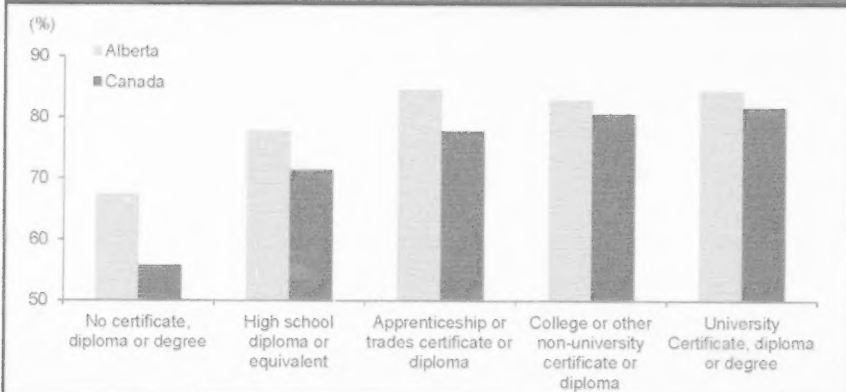
The recently released NHS results on the labour market reveal that Alberta's relatively high employment rate is not confined to certain age groups or education levels. Alberta's employment rate is higher than the national average across all these categories, indicating broadly based strength.

Chart 1: Employment rate by age (2011)



Source: Statistics Canada, National Household Survey, 2011, Release #2

Chart 2: Employment rate by highest level of educational attainment (2011)*



Source: Statistics Canada, National Household Survey, 2011, Release #2
* Individuals between 25 and 64 years of age

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